

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claim 1 claims 5 zones (Z1, Z2, Z3, Z4 and Z5). Z1 and Z3 are pyrolysis/gasification zones, and Z2 and Z4 are separation zones and Z5 is a combustion zone. The prior art teaches a similar apparatus, but does not teach or suggest that zones Z1 and Z3 are fluidized bed gasifiers, where zone Z3 directly feeds solids to a combustion zone Z5. In other words, the prior art teaches separating the gaseous products and the solid products in zone Z4, and then sending them to the combustion furnace, but does not teach or suggest sending the solid residue of Z3 directly to a combustion furnace.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MATTHEW J. MERKLING whose telephone number is (571)272-9813. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexa Neckel can be reached on (571) 272-1446. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/M. J. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 1795

/Alexa D. Neckel/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1795